7t Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
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794 tween civil and religious authorities. They are in charge of the fiestas for the saints whom they represent: San Francisco, San Pedro the Martyr, Santa Lucía, and Sacramento. The internal ranking of this set of officials is based on time of entry. This varies in the annual cycle since the new alférez enters just before the fiesta for which he will be responsible. He will be expected to give deference to the three who have preceded him during [192] the year. The terms applied to this fluctuating ranking system in order of highest to lowest are *hilon ta pasaro* (remains as past), *pasaro* (past official), *ščebal ʔaľ ʔalperes* (second new alférez), and *ʔaľ ʔalperes* (new alférez).

794 562 Outside of the traditional religious hierarchy are roles performed by functionaries on the basis of specific skills. These include the fiscal, assistant to the priest, and the *meʔeletik*, women who serve as prayer-reciters. The fiscal takes orders from the priest when the latter is in town, and in the absence of the priest he directs the activities of the mayordomos within the church. He is chosen on the basis of his knowledge of Spanish and willingness to perform the priests' bidding. He remains in office as long as he wishes, or until he is forcibly retired by the priest or by the mayordomos. When retired, he has an ex officio role saying prayers at funerals, and is often called upon for house ceremonies and as godfather in baptisms. The retired fiscales attend mass more often than the rest of the townspeople and sit in the front near the altar. The prayer-reciters are usually widowed or single women of the town whom the lay sisters have organized as support in responding to the catechism.

621 794 [192] The officials who have served in five posts in the civil hierarchy and six posts in the religious hierarchy become *pasaroetik*, the Tzeltal rendering of *pasados* or former officials. Any one of these men may be eligible to serve as one of two principales, one chosen from Alannantik and one from Ahk'olnantik. They remain in office until they are too old to serve or until death. Each of the outlying barrios has two principales chosen from among men who have served in office.

Entry Into and Exit from Office

621 666 The constitution assures local autonomy in the election of civil officials. The officials of Tzoʔontahal, including the two principales, president,

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síndico, four regidores, ten policemen, four judges, and the "signers" meet in the town hall on the twentieth of November. Except for the post of president, which is now a contested position, each incumbent names his own successor. The president opens the meeting with an address to the principales, saying, "Now, *Mamal* Principales, whom will we name to leave in power in the town hall to pass the year?" The principales reply with the question to each officer: "Whom have you thought of naming?"

Each officer gives a name, which is written down by the secretary. When the officials have heard who will be the new officials, the first judge speaks with the principales and the "signers" using the formal speech of the pat?o?tan to ask permission to serve the "gift" of trago. Eight days later an assembly of all the male household heads takes place. The president announces the names of the nominated officials in Tzeltal and the secretary announces them in Spanish. The president asks for a show of hands of all those who support the nominations. If the man who is named does not want to take the office, he may request withdrawal of his name. The president accepts refusal by all nominees for civil posts if there is adequate excuse.

The great majority of men begin their careers between the ages of twenty-two and thirty. Only seventeen men, or 5 percent of the 311 household heads censused (Table 24), had reached the age of thirty without serving in any office. Among men fifty and over, only two men had not filled any religious post (Table 25), and all had served in some civil post.

There are two major channels of mobility in the civil hierarchy. The more common course is for a young married man to enter as a policeman, either at the third or fourth level. Next, he will again be named as policeman, or possibly third or fourth regidor, if he is a poor man and has little hope of rising to the higher posts. If the man or his father is well off, he will be asked to serve as alférez. The appointment may be made with or without prior service in the civil or religious hierarchy, and the main prerequisite is having sufficient money to pay for the expenses. Once he fills this post, he will be eligible for first or second regidor since he will have learned the major speeches required in ritual gatherings. Formerly he took on at this point the post of assistant judge. These positions are now assigned to incumbents from the outlying barrios, and the number of posts a man in the center must fill in order to become a pasado has been reduced

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794 may at any time in his career be called upon as alférez. This may occur
[625] even before he has served as a junior mayordomo or policeman since the
[556] post depends on his own or his father's wealth.

621 The normal career of an official in the traditional hierarchy involves a
794 balance of civil and religious posts. A man enters these posts according to
561 convenience, not in a rigid alternation between civil and religious wings. The rough balancing of posts can be seen in the careers of men over fifty in Table 25. According to informants, a man should start and end his career in the religious wing. By the age of thirty, forty-three men had filled at least one post in the religious hierarchy, and only twenty-four men had served in the civil hierarchy (Table 24). The religious posts are considered less onerous than the civil posts since the incumbents are in attendance only one day a week instead of every day, and their terms in office last only six months.

621 Wealth level, except in cases of extreme poverty, does not limit a man's
794 participation in the traditional hierarchy. Of fourteen men over seventy,
556 eight had completed their civil posts and seven their religious posts. Three who had not followed the traditional career lines had served as president. The town is small enough so that career lines have not followed any polarization of the upper levels of the hierarchy as occurs in towns of larger size (Bunzel 1952, Camara 1952, Cancian 1965). Discrimination is based on residence rather than wealth—those Indians who reside in barrios and colonias cannot reach any post higher than that of assistant judge. Wealth level is a factor, however, in the time span of the individual's career, since at some time before becoming second or first regidor he must have filled the expensive post of alférez. Table 25 lists the careers of men fifty years of age and over in order of wealth. It is possible to finish a career in office by the age of fifty, but if a man has less than one hectare of land, it is unlikely that he will finish before he is sixty-five. The Indians of Tzo'ontahal do not however maximize the importance of passing through the hi-
[554] erarchy. It is a duty not a goal, and the reward in prestige is minimal.

794 The only post in which wealth has been crucial was that of alférez. The
556 incumbent and the household of which he was a member spent 3,000 pesos
796 to carry out the fiestas with which he was charged in his year in office.
• 666 The president, the four judges, and the four regidores chose the alférez

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
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shortly before the fiesta of the saint's day with which he was charged. When the nomination was made, the president sent out the first policeman with the chief policeman to bring the man chosen to the town hall. They expected, and were always confronted with, resistance to the nomination. In order to gain acceptance they got the nominee drunk in a drinking session at the town hall. Liquor was measured out, and all the officials drank only a half cup at each round, but the new alférez was required to drink a full cup. The rounds continued until the new alférez was drunk. If he did not accept at this session, he was put in jail to think it over. Another drinking session took place the following day.

Nomination to the post of alférez was the only situation in which the jail penalty has been brought into effect, since refusal by nominees to other posts simply means that the officials "look for someone else." The reason given for invoking the punishment was "we know he has the wealth and therefore he should serve." Until 1965 the town had always succeeded in recruiting two of the alfereces from Ahk'olnantik and two from Alannantik. Since the upper division of Ahk'olnantik has grown at a more rapid rate than the lower division, candidates were found only in Ahk'olnantik. This unbalancing of the population ratios undermined the institution of alférez, which had always been the most unpopular position. When I returned to the field in 1967, it had been eliminated.

The Functions of Civil Officials

An analysis of the formally prescribed functions of the civil officials must take into account three sources of data: the functions as prescribed by state legislation, the functions as understood by local officials, and the observed activities of the officials. Table 26 compares the functions of officials as stated in the constitution of the state of Chiapas (Secretaría del Gobierno Departmental de Chiapas, 1828: Decreto 52, Nov. 30, 1825) [3] to statements of informants and to my observations of the carrying out of their official obligations.

3. I have chosen this constitution as the first post-independence statement of the status of local civil administrators.

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port. At his death, he had no successor, and "the town remained in peace."

In this first political contest, the conflict was interpreted as opposition between the dual divisions. Factional disputes and the sense of political responsibility and control were contained within these parameters, and any conflict was conceived of as a threat to territorial balancing mechanisms.

The new factions that have developed since 1963 are tied to economic rather than territorial competition. In 1960 the first truck-owning cooperative was organized under the leadership of the former Ladino secretary. The twenty shareholders of the town had only a small amount of capital in the truck, and the controlling interest was in the hands of the secretary's wife. The cooperative was merely a device to gain business in carrying pottery and wheat from the town to the market centers. In 1963 a new truck-owning cooperative was organized by local Indians. The two brothers, Santiago and José, secured capital to buy the truck from thirty residents of the town without any assistance from outside. The shareholders of the new cooperative came from both sides of the dual division, and from the outlying barrios.

When the leaders of the new cooperative tried to get permits and certificates to license the car and the operator, they were refused by the town president who was a shareholder of the first cooperative. The Indians then hired a Ladino truck driver from the neighboring town, and the son of one of the shareholders served as assistant. They realized that it was necessary to get control of the local political positions in order to extend their operations. With the help of the schoolteacher, they got eighty-one signatures on the petition for the PRI candicacy of one of the brothers, José, in the presidential nomination of 1964. He was opposed by a ladinoized Indian living in one of the barrios who was backed by the Ladino secretary who was leader of the competing trucking cooperative. The opponent did not have a chance of winning, as the leaders of the new cooperative pointed out, because of two strikes against him: he was not a resident of the center and he had only PAN backing. The Indians are aware that nothing can be gained politically by a PAN-backed president since PRI is now the party in control of regional and national offices.

After José's election, the Indian truck driver was able to get a driving license. With the help of the schoolmaster, the cooperative was able to get

In addition to this regular ladder of officials representing the center and its close-lying barrios are judges representing the *colonias*, or rural settlements, of San Vicente, San Caralampio, and Crus Quemada. They do not regularly attend the townhall sessions, but always appear at major ceremonies and at the inauguration of new officials. Only after I had elicited officials from two informants was I able to get from the third the three judges of the colonias with the question, "Are there any other officials in the cabildo?"

These civil officials constitute the traditional ladder of the hierarchy. The positions of president and *sintiku* (in Spanish *síndico*), not included in the offices of the townhall as a category by informants, were elicited in response to the question stated above. These posts are occupied by younger men who are able to read, write, and speak fluently in Spanish. Literacy, until the present generation, was limited to those in the 30-year age bracket. Those with such skills passed immediately into the *comisario ejidal*, commission for land grants, where they assisted in the control and redistribution of land granted under the ejido program, or went directly into the post of *síndico*. Thus they were able to avoid the onerous and time-consuming functions of the traditional posts and enter into the remunerative post of president, where their authority was recognized at an early age. With improved literacy, the competition for such posts is increasing. Although informants say that the post of president alternates for the two sides of the dual division, case materials do not bear this out.

The only Ladino in the hierarchy is the secretary. For the first time this year (1964) the post of secretary has been taken by an Indian of the town. This is part of the power play described below.

Naming of civil officials is done in November, first in a closed session in the townhall at which each official names his successor, followed by a mass meeting *(Komun K'op)* at which the names are read to the assembled household heads in the plaza. To the question, "What are all the kinds of offices in the church?" the response was given: *martomaetik*, mayordomos or caretakers, and *alperesetik*, alfereces (or captains, the Spanish term *alfereces* comes from the Arabic). There are 16 mayordomos. Role terms for the mayordomos indicated that each saint was repre-

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was done at his order for the school.[11] The new co-operative was harassed by the old group, since the president did everything in his power to cut down their competition. As fiscal, his other role, he maneuvered the appointment of the chief business agent of the new truck cooperative and three other members as *niẽʔanil martomaetik*, junior caretakers of the saints. This meant that their Sundays were occupied in church affairs and cut into their taxiing of passengers from Tzoʔontahal to Himšol, the neighboring Ladino town.

The nomination of the president was effected by winning the support of the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI). Supporters of the nominee secured over 85 signatures from townspeople; the opposition candidate failed to get more than 28. Once PRI support was obtained, the election on November 20 was assured since one-party rule prevails here as in the capital. This is the first election which has been contested in 10 years. The last contest came when some members of the barrio of Yut' hok became members of the minor party, Partido Acción Nacional (PAN). Because this group and their presidential candidate all came from one side of the dual division, Alannantik, those from the other side said that they should have a party representative. They drew up a plan to run a candidate on PRI. The PAN candidate won. The present contest was drawn on the basis of membership in the truck-owning cooperatives which cut across the dual division.

The present nominee did not want to run for office. Early in the running there were verbal threats on his life. He had never passed in any office other than that of president of the ejido commission, and although the office of president is not a rung in the ladder to office, it is expected that the incumbent would at least have experience as síndico. Three sources of opposition to his candidacy developed. First in importance was the original trucking cooperative, which objected to the competition of the president and his faction in the new cooperative. Second, these members spread the rumor that the new president would bring in federal agents to break up the liquor traffic, which was becoming one of Tzoʔontahal's most important economic self-development projects. Thus all the distillers were apprehensive of their future under his term of office. Third, there was opposition on the

[11] Siverts (1964) describes Ladinos' "competition for each others' Indians in Cancuc."

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Third, there was opposition on the score that the president had never passed in any other public office. The only incident revealing the discontent was the firing of eight shots at (or above) the president's brother following the house festival on the eve of the inauguration.

The principales, who "formerly were the ones who ruled," no longer have a part in the power struggle

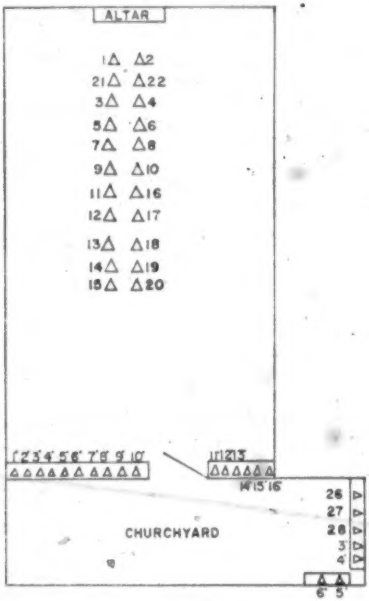

CHART 11 — NEW OFFICIALS INSIDE CHURCH, NEW YEAR'S DAY

OFFICIALS:
1'-16' Mayordomos

Remaining numbers refer to officials listed in Charts 7-9.

which centers on party membership and economic competition. Their ceremonial role in rituals is preserved as a link with the past as well as a sign of continuity between old and new officials.

In the inauguration of the religious officials, divergence in the elicited and the observed event (App. 2, column 4) occurred first of all in the shift of locale for the common meal from the churchyard to the house of the *?ali?bal* instead of in the churchyard (App. 2, Q. 19). This was a clue to the power struggle going on in the church. When I questioned my informant about the disparity, he told me the following story:

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666

[For details on the inauguration of various civil and religious officials, see categories 621 and 794 respectively.]